**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY SCREENING**

**FOR**

**Engage Programme**

Statutory Assessment Project Team
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## Index

# 1.  BACKGROUND

| 1.1      Title of policy |
|---|
| Engage Programme |

| 1.2      Type of Policy Development |
|---|
| This is a New Policy |

| 1.3      Description of policy |
|---|

**Introduction**

**'Engage'** is one strand within the Standards and Learning Project within the Education Restart Programme, which has been established following the period of school closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Consequently, as part of the Education Restart Programme.  The Standards and Learning Project aims to maintain (or re-dress) educational standards, acknowledging the period of time learners have experienced outside of the normal classroom environment, and to provide continuity of learning during a "new normal" scenario.

The Standards and Learning Project focusses on six key areas associated with Standards and Learning and restarting the education system:

- Curriculum delivery and Assessment,
- Qualifications,
- School Improvement,
- Teacher Professional Learning,
- Parental Involvement / Engagement,
- IT infrastructure and resources.

**Description of the project:**

The Engage Project aims to limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement on their return to school through provision of high quality one to one, small group or team teaching support in every school in Northern Ireland

**What is the policy trying to achieve? (aims/outcomes)**

- On 30 June 2020, the Executive agreed an allocation of £12 million for learning support programmes and summer activities in schools. The Minister of Education has asked for a learning support programme entitled 'Engage' which targets both primary and post-primary pupils, **particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds**. Funding of £11.25 million will be made available for the Engage programme during 2020/21.

- Given the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, **all** primary and post primary schools in Northern Ireland will be provided with funding to provide additional teaching resources.

- The Programme will provide child centred one to one, small group or team teaching support within school by qualified teachers to those pupils identified by schools as most benefiting from additional support to engage with learning following the COVID-19 period of lockdown.

- There is extensive evidence supporting the impact of high quality one to one and small group teaching support as a support strategy for learning, particularly after a period of missed schooling.  Support delivered by qualified teachers is likely to have the highest impact.

- The teaching programme will focus on supporting pupils to be motivated and engaged to learn and will be guided by the school, linked to the curriculum and focused on the areas where pupils would most benefit from additional teaching, practice and feedback.

- Schools can supplement the funding provided to deliver the programme with other funding available to schools for example from the Extended Schools Programme or  via the Common Funding Formula in order to increase the level of support provided.

**Programme Aim**

- To limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement on their return to school through provision of

high quality one to one, small group or team teaching support in every school in Northern Ireland

## **Programme Objectives**

- ➢ To provide an appropriately differentiated programme of child-centered one to one, small group and/or team teaching support to pupils of **all** abilities who schools identify as those who would benefit from additional support to engage with learning following the COVID-19 period of lockdown.
- ➢ To support pupils to increase their confidence, engagement, motivation to learn and to develop the tools and skills they require to become independent learners.
- ➢ To develop and enhance pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in the key cross-curricular skills of Using Mathematics, Communication and Using ICT.
- ➢ To support and enhance pupils' development of the whole curriculum thinking skills and personal capabilities
- ➢ To develop pupils' understanding of how they learn (meta-cognition) and their self-knowledge about explicit strategies and behaviours for learning to help build positive mindsets, coping skills and resilience.
- ➢ To complement and enhance the existing work of schools (such as extended schools, special education needs and/or nurture provision) to provide support for pupils to engage with learning following the COVID-19 period of lockdown.

## **Which schools can access the programme?**

- ➢ Given the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, **all** primary and post-primary schools in Northern Ireland will be provided with varying levels of funding to provide additional teaching resource.
- ➢ Research indicates that there is a risk that the gains made in closing our attainment gap could be significantly impacted by the lockdown period. Most agree the consequences of the pandemic will be far reaching—for all children, but particularly for those from socially disadvantaged families.
- ➢ Consequently, **approximately 400 schools with average levels of Free School Meal** entitlement (28% of pupils) or higher will, dependent on size, be provided with funding to support either 0.2, 0.5, one or two additional teachers during the 2020/21 academic year providing **over 300 additional teachers across the system, as set out below**.

> - School closures and COVID-19 have nonetheless affected the whole community. In particular, it is clear that key workers may not have had the time or opportunity to provide as much learning support for their children as they would have wished.
> - In recognition of this context, **all other primary and post-primary schools**, with below average Free School Meal Entitlement, will also receive funding to provide (depending on their size) 30, 45 or 60 substitute days during 2020/21 in order to deliver a programme to support pupils to engage with learning.
> - In this way the Programme targets those schools with concentrations of disadvantage but also provides universal support across all primary and post-primary schools.

## Which pupils can access the programme?

> - Schools know their pupils best and will have the autonomy and flexibility to use their professional judgement to decide which of their pupils and year groups will participate in the programme. They will also structure the programme within their school based on their own unique circumstances.
> - The programme is aimed at pupils of **all** abilities identified by school as those who would most benefit from additional support to engage with learning following the COVID-19 lockdown period.
> - Normal formative assessment approaches within the classroom setting will be the most useful way of identifying individual pupil learning needs and those pupils who will benefit from support from the programme to engage with learning. That approach will retain an emphasis on making pupils feel confident and secure in what they already know while supporting engagement with learning.

## How will recruitment be carried out?

> - Schools will decide themselves whether to employ additional staff either on a temporary basis or via NISTR to deliver the programme or use the funding available from the programme to backfill and allow an existing staff member(s) to deliver the Engage Programme.

## What are the targets for the Engage Programme and how will it be evaluated?

> - The Engage programme will not have specific targets for system wide improvement of Key Stage or examination outcomes, as the focus of the programme is to limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils'

learning and engagement on their return to school. It will not be exclusively focused on particular year groups.

➢ Rather schools will identify their intended outcomes and success criteria and will monitor and evaluate the impact of the programme using their own internal assessment systems and teacher recording and observation to monitor the progress of pupils selected for support through the programme. The emphasis for evaluation will be the impact on pupils' attitudes to and dispositions for learning, as well as their attainment. Evidenced-based judgements of the programme by schools will then inform further development of interventions.

➢ At system level, a Strategic Oversight Group will be established to monitor the outworking of the Programme and the ETI will provide an overall evaluation of the quality of the work within the programme and the outcomes for the teachers employed in the programme and the pupils targeted.

| 1.4 What factors could contribute to, or detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy? (Please click on relevant boxes) | |
|---|---|
| None | ☐ |
| Legislative | ☐ |
| Financial | ☒ |
| Others (please specify)<br><br>Click here to insert text. | |

| 1.5 Main stakeholders affected (Please click on relevant boxes) | |
|---|---|
| Pupils (Actual or Potential) | ☒ |
| Parents | ☒ |
| Teaching Staff | ☒ |
| Trade Unions or Professional Organisations | ☐ |
| Other Public Sector Organisations | ☐ |
| Departmental Staff | ☒ |
| Others (please specify)<br><br>Click here to insert text. | |

| 1.6 | Who is responsible for? |
|---|---|

(a) Devising the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project

Department of Education (DE)

(b) Implementing it

Education Authority (EA)

(c) Explain the relationship?

Funding for the 'Engage' programme will be allocated by DE to EA as earmarked funding. The EA as funding authority in turn will allocate funding to schools as per the agreed project methodology.

| 1.7 | Other policies or objectives with a bearing on this policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project |
|---|---|

The Engage Progamme is a key element of the broader Standards and Learning Project within the Education Restart Programme. The purpose of the Standards and Learning Project is to maintain (or re-dress) educational standards, acknowledging the period of time learners have experienced outside of the normal classroom environment, and to provide continuity of learning during a "new normal" scenario.

The Standards and Learning Project focusses on six key areas associated with Standards and Learning and restarting the education system:

- Curriculum delivery and Assessment,
- Qualifications,
- School Improvement,
- Teacher Professional Learning,
- Parental Involvement / Engagement,
- IT infrastructure and resources.

## 2. EVIDENCE

| Section 75 Category | Details of Evidence/Information |
|---|---|
| Religious Belief | In 2017/18, 37.2% (334) of Protestant boys entitled to free school meals achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A* - C or equivalent including GCSE English and maths compared with 46.7% (805) of Catholic boys entitled to free school meals<br>Source: Qualifications and destinations of Northern Ireland school leavers 2017/18 |
| Political Opinion | The political opinion of pupils is not known as it is not collected. See above as a proxy for political opinion |
| Racial Group | Qualifications of school leavers by ethnic origin 2017/2018[1]<br><br>*See table below*<br><br>Source: Qualifications and destinations of Northern Ireland school leavers 2017/18 |
| Age | There are 173,856 pupils in primary schools (years 1-7). In total, 145,085 pupils are enrolled in post-primary schools. |

Qualifications of school leavers by ethnic origin 2017/2018[1]

| | TOTAL | |
|---|---|---|
| | Numbers | % |
| **WHITE** [5] | | |
| 3+ A-levels A*-C[2] | 8531 | 40.8 |
| 3+ A-levels A*-E[2] | 11170 | 53.4 |
| 2+ A-levels A*-E[2] | 11862 | 56.7 |
| At Least 5 GCSEs A*-C[2] | 17839 | 85.3 |
| At Least 5 GCSEs A*-C[2] inc English and maths | 14801 | 70.8 |
| At Least 5 GCSEs A*-G[2] | 20229 | 96.7 |
| No GCSEs[3] | 155 | 0.7 |
| No Formal Qualifications[4] | 122 | 0.6 |
| *TOTAL WHITE* [5] | 20911 | 100.0 |
| **MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS**[5] | | |
| 3+ A-levels A*-C[2] | 244 | 37.5 |
| 3+ A-levels A*-E[2] | 341 | 52.4 |
| 2+ A-levels A*-E[2] | 368 | 56.5 |
| At Least 5 GCSEs A*-C[2] | 535 | 82.2 |
| At Least 5 GCSEs A*-C[2] inc English and maths | 426 | 65.4 |
| At Least 5 GCSEs A*-G[2] | 604 | 92.8 |
| No GCSEs[3] | 9 | 1.4 |
| No Formal Qualifications[4] | 8 | 1.2 |
| *TOTAL MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS*[5] | 651 | 100.0 |

| | |
|---|---|
| | |
| Marital Status | In 2017 there were 8,300 marriages in Northern Ireland; in the age band 16-19 there were 50 males and 74 females. In the same period, there were 92 civil partnerships; in the under 25 age band there were 6 partners - 4 male partners and 2 female partners. (Source: Registrar General Annual Report 2017) |
| Sexual Orientation | Source: Department of Education – Post Primary School Experiences of 16-21 year old people who are LGBT |
| Men And Women Generally | Information drawn from the annual school census exercise (2018) shows that there is a fairly even distribution of males and females within the school population, with 50.61% male pupils and 49.39% female. |
| Disability | Data gathered as part of the annual school census exercise in 2018 shows that 19.3% of pupils in schools were recorded as having special educational needs; and that 5.5% had a statement of special educational needs. |
| Dependants | The 2015 YLT Survey (of 16 year old young people) reported 9% of their respondents had caring responsibilities. The average age of a young carer is 12 (Barnardo's).<br><br>At 31 March 2018, there were 3,109 Looked After Children in Northern Ireland. |

| Proportion of respondents who said the impact of their experiences as an LGB&T student had a negative impact on… | LGB (n=467) |
|---|---|
| *Educational achievement* | 19.4% (n=90, base=463) of respondents |

**2.2   Taking into account the evidence gathered at 2.1 what are the needs, experiences and priorities of each category in relation to this particular Budget?**

| Section 75 category | Needs/Experiences/Uptake/Priorities |
|---|---|
| Religious Belief | "Protestants continue to have lower levels of attainment than Catholics at GCSE, GCSEs including English and Maths, and A Level."* |

| | |
|---|---|
| | There is persistent under-achievement and lack of progression to further and higher education of school leavers entitled to free school meals, particularly Protestants, notably Protestants males."* |
| Political Opinion | Religious belief is taken as a proxy for political opinion. |
| Racial Group | "Children from the Traveller community and Roma children have some of the lowest levels of attainment of all equality groups."* |
| Age | Research by Parsons and Bynner (2007) notes the impact that poor educational outcomes can have on a person's life trajectory. "The problem does not recede with time but can continue to limit opportunities and diminish life chances and the quality of life in all the main domains of adult functioning: education, family, workplace and community". |
| Marital Status | In 2019, 16.3% of dependent children lived in cohabiting couple families.<br><br>(Source: ONS Statistical bulletin: Families and Households) |
| Sexual Orientation | (table below)<br><br>(The above table is an extract from a document entitled "Post-primary school experiences of 16-21 year old people who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and/or Transgender" on the Department of Education's website – this can be accessed at https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Research%20report%20no%2062_2017.pdf) |
| Men And Women Generally | "Males continue to have lower levels of attainment than females, beginning in primary school and continuing throughout schooling to GCSE and A Level".* |

Sexual Orientation table:

| Proportion of respondents who said the impact of their experiences as an LGB&T student had a negative impact on… | LGB (n=467) | Transgender (n=65)*** |
|---|---|---|
| Attendance | 21.9% (n=102, base=465) of respondents | 41.5% (n=27, base=65) of respondents |
| Educational achievement | 19.4% (n=90, base=463) of respondents | 38.5% (n=25, base=65) of respondents |
| Emotional wellbeing inside and outside of school | 61.3% (n=285, base=465) of respondents | 73.8% (n=48, base=65) of respondents |

| | |
|---|---|
| Disability | "Students with SEN or a disability have lower attainment levels than students without any SEN or disability, and are less likely to go on to higher education."* |
| Dependants | "Young carers often miss out on opportunities that other children have to play and learn". Barnardo's<br><br>"Looked After Children have often suffered many disadvantages in their lives and many of them have low educational achievements which are likely to impact on their future lives and chances for employment".<br><br>(extract from DE Circular 2011/24 entitled "The introduction of Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children" – this can be accessed at<br><br>https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/2011-24-introduction-to-pep.pdf) |

*(Per "Key Inequalities in Education and Communities" document produced by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in October 2017)

## 3. SCREENING QUESTIONS

| 3.1 What is the likely impact of this policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project on equality of opportunity for each of the Section 75 equality categories? | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 75 category** | **Level of Impact?** | **Details of policy impact** |
| Religious belief | MINOR | The 'Engage' learning support programme targets both primary and post-primary pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. |
| Political opinion | MINOR | The programme is aimed at pupils of all abilities identified by school as those who would most benefit from additional support to engage with learning following the COVID-19 lockdown period. |
| Racial group | MINOR | |
| Age | MINOR | It will not have specific targets for system wide improvement of Key Stage or examination outcomes, as its focus is to limit any long-term adverse impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on educational standards by supporting pupils' learning and engagement on their return to school. |
| Marital status | MINOR | It will not be exclusively focused on particular year groups. |
| Sexual Orientation | MINOR | At a system level, research indicates that there is a risk that the gains made in closing our attainment gap could be significantly impacted by the lockdown period. Most agree the consequences of the pandemic will be far reaching—for all children, but particularly for those from socially disadvantaged families. Consequently, the highest level of funding will be provided to approximately 400 schools with average or hogher levels of Free School Meal entitlement (28% of pupils). |
| Men and Women generally | MINOR | |
| Disability | MINOR | |
| Dependants | MINOR | A number of Section 75 Groups who are such as Newcomers (particularly Roma children), Travellers, children with SEN are more likely to be selected for the programme as these groups have higher levels of educational underachievement and are more likely to require support to engage. |

| 3.2 | Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories? | |
|------|------|------|
| **Section 75 category** | **YES/NO** | **Provide Details** |
| Religious belief | NO | It is a learning support programme which aims to provide a differentiated programme of child-centered one to one, small group and/or team teaching support to pupils. It will particularly focus on the key cross-curricular skills of Using Mathematics, Communication and Using ICT. The programme is aimed at pupils of all abilities identified by school as those who would most benefit from additional support to engage with learning following the COVID-19 lockdown period. |
| Political opinion | NO | |
| Racial group | NO | |
| Age | NO | |
| Marital status | NO | |
| Sexual Orientation | NO | |
| Men and Women generally | NO | |
| Disability | NO | |
| Dependants | NO | |

| 3.3 To what extent is the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project likely to impact on good relations between: people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Good relations category** | **Impact** | **Details of policy impact** |
| Religious belief | NONE | It is a learning support programme which aims to provide a differentiated programme of child-centered one to one, small group and/or team teaching support to pupils. It will particularly focus on the key cross-curricular skills of Using Mathematics, Communication and Using ICT.<br><br>The programme is aimed at pupils of all abilities identified by school as those who would most benefit from additional support to engage with learning following the COVID-19 lockdown period. |
| Political opinion | NONE | |
| Racial group | NONE | |

| 3.4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Good relations category** | **YES/NO\*** | **Provide Details** |
| Religious belief | NO | |
| Political opinion | NO | |
| Racial group | NO | |

## 3.5 Additional considerations - Multiple identities

Please provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities and specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

Children with multiple Section 75 characteristics are likely to be impacted to a greater degree than others and the effects of socio economic disadvantage similarly impacts across all Section 75 categories. Children with multiple Section 75 characteristics are more likely to be selected for the programme as these groups have higher levels of educational underachievement and are more likely to require support to engage.

# 4. SCREENING DECISION

Not to conduct an equality impact assessment; although there is a minor impact, on one or more of the equality of opportunities and/or good relations categories but mitigation/alternative policies will offset the minor adverse impact(s).

**Details which support the screening decision**

Given the unique circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, all primary and post-primary schools across Northern Ireland will be provided with varying levels of funding to provide additional teaching resource. The Engage Programme will provide the greatest level of support and funding to schools with higher concentrations of disadvantage, whilst at the same time provide funding to support pupils in all schools.

Schools will provide the Programme to identified pupils who require support to engage with learning irrespective of their religious belief, racial group, political opinion or any other Section 75 category.

A number of Section 75 Groups such as Newcomers (particularly Roma children), Travellers, children with SEN are more likely to be selected for the programme, as these groups have higher levels of educational underachievement and are more likely to require support to engage.

# 5.    TIMETABLING AND PRIORITISING

| 5.1    NOT APPLICABLE AS POLICY SCREENED OUT |
|---|

| Criterion | Priority Rating |
|---|---|
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations | NA |
| Social need | NA |
| Effect on people's daily lives | NA |
| Relevance to a public authority's functions | NA |
| **Total** | **NA** |

| 5.2    If the policy is affected by timetables established by other relevant Public Authorities please provide details |
|---|
| **None** |
| **Note:** Details of the Department's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable will be included in a Quarterly Screening Report. |

# 6. MITIGATION

If you conclude that the likely impact is **'minor'** and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you should consider: mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

| Why and how will the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations? |
|---|
| A Strategic Oversight Group will be established to monitor the outworking of the programme and the ETI will provide an overall evaluation of the quality of the work and the outcomes for the teachers (employed in the programme) and the pupils targeted. |

# 7.    MONITORING

Effective monitoring will help identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

| Please detail what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project on any of Section 75 equality categories |
| --- |
| At system level, a Strategic Oversight Group will be established to monitor the outworking of the Programme.<br><br>By 31 August 2021, the ETI will provide an overall evaluation of the quality of the work within the programme and the outcomes for the teachers employed in the programme and the pupils targeted. Outputs from the Engage Planner will provide important information for ETI to draw upon.<br><br>Schools will identify their individual intended outcomes and success criteria and will monitor and evaluate the impact of the programme using their own internal assessment systems and teacher recording and observation to monitor the progress of pupils selected for support through the programme. The emphasis in evaluation will be the impact on pupils' attitudes to and dispositions for learning, as well as their attainment. Evidenced-based judgements of the programme by schools will then inform further development of interventions. |

# 8.    DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION

| 8.1 | Please state if the policy in any way discourages persons with disabilities from participating in public life or fails to promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities. |
|---|---|
| The proposal does not discourage persons with disabilities from participating in public life or fail to promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities | |

| 8.2 | Please state if there is an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities or encourage participation in public life by making changes to the policy or introducing additional measures. |
|---|---|
| There are no particular opportunities to promote positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities or encourage participation in public life by making changes to the proposal or introducing additional measures | |

| 8.3 | Please detail what data you will collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy with reference to the disability duties. |
|---|---|
| Not Applicable. | |

# 9. CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

| 9.1 How does the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project review/revised policy/pilot/project affect anyone's Human Rights? | |
|---|---|
| The Human Rights Act (1998) | Neutral Impact |
| The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child *(UNCRC)* | Neutral Impact |
| The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities *(UNCRPD)* | Neutral Impact |
| The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) | Neutral Impact |
| Other,(please state here) | None |

| 9.2 If you have identified a negative impact who is affected and how? |
|---|
| Not Applicable |

| 9.3 Outline any actions which could be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or to ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy/policy review/revised policy/pilot/project. |
|---|
| None |

# 10. APPROVAL AND AUTHORISATION

| Screened by: | Position | Date |
|---|---|---|
| Jeff Brown | DP, Statutory Assessment Project Team | 06/08/2020 |
| **Approved by:** | **Position** | **Date** |
| **Suzanne Kingon** | G7, Statutory Assessment Project Team | **06/08/2020** |

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| FOR COMPLETION BY EQUALITY TEAM | | |
|---|---|---|
| Screening Decision | **Agreed** | |
| Quality Assured by: | **R Magowan** | **12/08/2020** |
| Click here to enter comments. | | |
| Date Directorate/Team Informed: | 12/08/2020 | |

| FOR COMPLETION BY POLICY TEAM | |
|---|---|
| TRIM Ref No. | ED1/20/268957 |
| Date screening form placed on Internet by policy team | Click here to select date. **Note** As soon as possible, following quality assurance, you must publish a copy of the screening form on the Department's website: https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications With a link on the "Policy Screening" page: https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/de-equality-screenings |